

Testimony Before the Committee on Parks, Community & Customer Services

Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at 10:30 a.m.

Statement in Strong Support of Resolution 17-39, Requesting the City Administration
Maintain Thomas Square As A Public Park

To: Chair Ann H. Kobayashi, Vice Chair Trevor Ozawa and Members:

From: Galen Fox

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I am Galen Fox, a resident of Kaka'ako and member of Kaka'ako United, an organization of concerned residents and citizens committed to ensuring Kaka'ako is developed to enhance our quality of life. We support open space and parks for our urban neighborhoods, including at Thomas Square, across the street from Kaka'ako.

I am very concerned that Thomas Square's transfer from the Department of Parks and Recreation to the Department of Enterprise Services will end up an open-space disaster. I go by Thomas Square and am appalled by the new high wall erected around the park. It not only blocks off the park from the community, but it also hides what is being done behind the towering wall. How much does our new wall cost? Why can't we see through it? Why the secrecy?

The Kaka'ako community should have been given a briefing and allowed to provide input to ensure that the City Administration maintains the public park as required under the law. Section 46-65.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is explicit: maintain Thomas Square as a public park.

I strongly support Resolution 17-39 and also ask the committee to add language to provide more information on the specific plans for Thomas Square to ensure that it remains a public park for the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

PCCS